



Brownfields 2005 Grant Fact Sheet

West Contra Costa Unified School District, Hercules, CA

EPA Brownfields Program

EPA's Brownfields Program empowers states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic development to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield site is real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. On January 11, 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act. Under the Brownfields Law, EPA provides financial assistance to eligible applicants through four competitive grant programs: assessment grants, revolving loan fund grants, cleanup grants, and job training grants. Additionally, funding support is provided to state and tribal response programs through a separate mechanism.

Community Description

The West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) was selected to receive a brownfields cleanup grant. The WCCUSD is a nonprofit educational organization that serves the citizens and municipalities of western Contra Costa County, which is located in the East San Francisco Bay area. The target site is located in the City of Hercules (population 19,488). Hercules is one of the most ethnically diverse communities in the East Bay area, with a population that is 18.8 percent African American, 42.7 percent Asian, and 10.8 percent Hispanic. It also has a number of polluting industries, such as a dynamite factory.



Cleanup Grant



\$199,420 for hazardous substances

EPA has selected the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) for a brownfields cleanup grant. Grant funds will be used to support public outreach activities, develop a remediation plan, and conduct cleanup activities at the City of Hercules' Wastewater Treatment Plant site. Use of the site as the wastewater treatment plant has resulted in soil and groundwater contamination, potentially including both microbial and hazardous waste contaminants. In addition, the area surrounding the site was used for explosives manufacturing.

Contacts

For further information, including specific grant contacts, additional grant information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at: www.epa.gov/brownfields.

EPA Region 9 Brownfields Team

415-972-3188

<http://www.epa.gov/region09/waste/brown/index.html>

Grant Recipient: West Contra Costa Unified School District, CA
510-412-4363

The cooperative agreement for this grant has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.

Although the city is growing, with 21 percent of its population of school age, Hercules does not have an elementary school. The only middle/high school in the area was designed for 700 students and now serves 900. All of the area schools are overcrowded. The site targeted for cleanup, the former wastewater treatment plant, is an ideal location for a school facility. However, it is contaminated with a variety of hazardous sub-

stances. Cleanup of the wastewater treatment plant site will remove potential threats to human health and the environment. Redevelopment of the site into a public school and playing fields will help the city address the overcrowding problem in area schools and bring open space and recreational opportunities to the community.